

This is an official

CDC Health Update

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Inhalation Anthrax Case Investigation, Pennsylvania, New York City – Update, 2/24/2006

Laboratory testing from the patient's storage/work facility, his van and his residence have identified *Bacillus anthracis*. These findings are consistent with the hypothesis that the patient's exposure occurred while working on contaminated hides while making traditional drums.

The patient remains hospitalized in Pennsylvania. Investigation of other potentially exposed persons continues; seven persons are currently on post-exposure prophylaxis for inhalation anthrax. None of these individuals have symptoms of anthrax. In addition, surveillance has not identified any other illness consistent with anthrax disease in NY and PA.

Animal hides pose a low risk of cutaneous anthrax, and an extremely low risk of inhalation anthrax. Exotic animal hides may pose a higher risk for exposure than domestic (U.S.-origin) hides. The risk of contracting *Bacillus anthracis* from handling individual hides is believed to be very low. The industrial handling of large numbers of hides, or hair from multiple animals, has historically been associated with increased risk of anthrax. Among the 236 cases of anthrax reported to CDC from 1955 to 1999, 153 (65%) were associated with industrial handling of animal hide or hair. Only 9 of the 153 cases (6%) associated with industrial handling of hair or hide were inhalation anthrax.

The risk of acquiring anthrax from an animal hide drum is very low. Of 236 cases of anthrax reported to CDC from 1955 through 1999, only one case of cutaneous anthrax was associated with a goat hide bongo drum purchased in Haiti. No cases of inhalation anthrax in the US have ever been associated with animal hide drums. The New York patient's exposure occurred when he was making and finishing drums made from untanned animal hides, and was not associated with playing finished drums. His exposure was similar to that experienced during industrial handling of hides, which has been previously associated with an increased risk of anthrax. CDC does not currently recommend prophylaxis for persons who have had contact with animal hide drums. However, drum owners or players should report any unexplained febrile illness or unusual skin lesions to their healthcare provider, and describe their recent contact with animal hide drums.

For case definitions, treatment guidelines, laboratory testing procedures, etc, see Anthrax Information for Health Care Providers.

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax/anthrax-hcp-factsheet.asp>

DHEC Contact Information for Reportable Diseases and Reporting Requirements

Reporting of cases or possible cases of anthrax consistent with South Carolina Law requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to your state or local public health department. (State Law # 44-29-10 and Regulation # 61-20) as per the DHEC 2004 List of Reportable Conditions available at: http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/docs/reportable_conditions.pdf

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

Regional Public Health Offices

Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.

Region 1

(Anderson, Oconee)

220 McGee Road
Anderson, SC 29625
Phone: (864) 231-1966
Fax: (864) 260-5623
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-298-4442

(Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda)

1736 S. Main Street
Greenwood, SC 29646
Phone: 1-888-218-5475
Fax: (864) 942-3690
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

Region 2

(Greenville, Pickens)

PO Box 2507
200 University Ridge
Greenville, SC 29602-2507
Phone: (864) 282-4139
Fax: (864) 282-4373
Nights / Weekends: (864) 460-5355 or
1-800-993-1186

(Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union)

PO Box 4217
151 E. Wood Street
Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217
Phone: (864) 596-2227 ext. 210
Fax: (864) 596-3443
Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825

Region 3

(Chester, Lancaster, York)

PO Box 817
1833 Pageland Highway
Lancaster, SC 29721
Phone: (803) 286-9948
Fax: (803) 286-5418
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-867-3886 or
1-888-739-0748

(Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland)

2000 Hampton Street
Columbia, SC 29204
Phone: (803) 576-2749
Fax: (803) 576-2993
Nights / Weekends: (803) 304-4252

Region 4

(Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter)

PO Box 1628
105 North Magnolia Street
Sumter, SC 29150
Phone: (803) 773-5511
Fax: (803) 773-6366
Nights/Weekends: 1-877-831-4647

(Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marlboro, Marion)

145 E. Cheves Street
Florence, SC 29506
Phone: (843) 661-4830
Fax: (843) 661-4859
Nights / Weekends: (843) 660-8145

Region 5

(Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg)

PO Box 1126
1550 Carolina Avenue
Orangeburg, SC 29116
Phone: (803) 533-7199
Fax: (803) 536-9118
Nights / Weekends: (803) 954-8513

Region 5 (cont)

(Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell)

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40
Aiken, SC 29801
Phone: (803) 642-1618
Fax: (803) 643-8386
Nights / Weekends: (803) 827-8668 or
1-800-614-1519

Region 6

(Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg)

2830 Oak Street
Conway, SC 29526-4560
Phone: (843) 365-3126
Fax: (843) 365-3153
Nights / Weekends: (843) 381-6710

Region 7

(Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester)

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600
N. Charleston, SC 29405
Phone: (843) 746-3806
Fax: (843) 746-3851
Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

Region 8

(Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper)

219 S. Lemacks Street
Walterboro, SC 29488
Phone: (843) 525-7603
Fax: (843) 549-6845
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-614-4698

Bureau of Disease Control

Acute Disease Epidemiology Division

1751 Calhoun Street
Box 101106
Columbia, SC
Phone: (803) 898-0861
Fax: (803) 898-0897
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.